(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also proposed to redefine the museum concept to keep pace with the evolving social changes;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) what are the details of districts/regions where this new concept is proposed to be implemented in Orissa and Jharkhand?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) In order to strengthen the museum movement and to re-invigorate the existing museum scenario in the country the scheme for financial assistance for "Promotion and Strengthening of Regional and Local Museums" was revised by Government in September, 2008. The salient features of the revised scheme are as under:-

i. Financial assistance upto Rs. 6 crores for setting up of a Museum under Category-I (State Museums and other Museums with exquisite collections) and upto Rs. 3 crores for setting up a Museums under Category-II (Regional and Local Museums).

ii. Financial Assistance to existing museums for upgradation and modernization was enhanced from Rs. 1.70 Crore to Rs. 5.00 crores in respect of Category-I Museums and from Rs. 60.00 lakhs to Rs. 2.5 crores in respect of Category-II Museums.

iii. The scheme envisages financing by Government of India upto 80% of the estimated amount (90% in case of museums in NE regions)

iv. Training and refresher courses for the museum staff are included as an integral part of the Scheme.

v. Purchase of exhibits is not financed under the Scheme.

(e) The scheme is applicable to all eligible museums from all States, including Orissa and Jharkhand.

Transportation of oil from caspian region

*23. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the issue of transportation of oil from Caspian region through the Mediterranean and Red Sea into India was discussed during the visit of Foreign Minister of Turkey to India in February, 2008;

(b) if so, the salient features of the discussion;

(c) whether it is also a fact that oil, if brought from Caspian region through the Mediterranean and Red Sea, will be cheaper;

(d) if so, whether Government has taken any decision on the issue; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) and (b) The Foreign Minister of Turkey, during his visit to India in February 2008, had outlined a proposal for

cooperation between Turkey, Israel and India for transportation of crude oil from the Caspian region through the Mediterranean and Red Sea and into India. Briefly, this project envisages transport of crude oil from Ceyhan port in Turkey to Ashkelon port in Israel in the Mediterranean Sea, initially through Very Large Crude Carriers (VLCCs) and eventually by laying a sub-sea pipeline. Thereafter, crude oil will be transported through the existing Ashkelon -Eilat pipeline in Israel to Eilat port on the Red Sea. From there, crude oil may be carried to India/other parts of Asia. The project is still in a conceptual stage and requires a detailed feasibility study to establish its techno-commercial viability. A tripartite meeting between Turkey-Israel-India was held in September 2008 at Ankara to discuss conceptual features of the project.

(c) to (e) Since the project is still in the conceptual stage, the cost of such oil can not be determined at this juncture. Our import of crude oil from various sources is decided after due consideration of its overall economics, taking into account particularly factors such as crude oil's technical suitability, price, transportation cost, yield and sustained availability. At present, bulk of India's crude oil is imported from the countries in the Middle East, namely, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, UAE and Kuwait. Crude oil is also imported in significant quantities from Nigeria, Malaysia and Angola. During the last 3 years, import of some crude oil from the Caspian Sea region, particularly Azerbaijan, has also been made.

Aviation scene in Bihar

*24. SHRI RAJNITI PRASAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of expansion of infrastructure-facilities at Patna and Gaya airport;

(b) how many more airports have been planned for Bihar;

(c) the present status of their executions; and

(d) whether Government would consider expanding infrastructural facilities and providing more air connectivity with different countries of the world in view of tourist influx in Gaya?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Patna: Patna Airport is a customs airport and has Runway 07/25 with usable length of 6330 ft. suitable for operation of A-320 type of aircraft with load restrictions. The existing Terminal Building is suitable for handling 300 passengers at a time with required facilities for handling Domestic and limited International flights.

AAI have a plan for extension of Runway, expansion or construction of new Terminal Building, construction of Apron etc. at this airport subject to availability of land by the Govt. of Bihar along with removal of obstruction in the approach paths of Runway.

Gaya: Gaya Airport has Runway Length of 7500 ft suitable for A-320 operations. Terminal Building is suitable for handling Domestic and limited International flights with capacity of 500 peak hour passengers.